

REMARKS

I. Introduction

Claims 1 to 9 are pending in the current application. In view of the foregoing amendments and following remarks, it is respectfully submitted that all of the presently pending claims are allowable, and reconsideration is respectfully requested.

II. Rejection of Claims 1 to 9 Under 35 U.S.C. §102(b)

Claims 1 to 9 were rejected under 35 U.S.C. §102(b) as anticipated by Japanese Published Patent Application No. 11-34770 ("Kinoshita et al."). Applicants respectfully submit that Kinoshita et al. do not anticipate the present claims as amended herein for at least the following reasons.

As an initial matter, Japanese Published Patent Application No. 11-34770 has not been properly cited in any Office Action to date. Applicants respectfully request proper citation of Japanese Published Patent Application No. 11-34770 with the next Office communication.

Claim 1 relates to a bumper for a motor vehicle. Claim 1 recites the features of an outer bumper part, and an inner bumper part including a base part and at least one side crosspiece positioned at an angle to the base part, regions of a transition from the base part to the side crosspiece configured so that deformation of the inner bumper part occurs in a predetermined direction in response to a force applied to the bumper, the region of the transition from the base part to the side crosspiece including a ridge pointing in a desired direction of deformation. Claim 1 also recites that the outer bumper part is connected to the inner bumper part. Claim 1 has been amended herein without prejudice to recite that the ridge is located at an upper portion of the inner bumper part. Support for this amendment may be found, for example, in Figure 3, and in the specification at page 6, lines 8 to 13.

Claim 9 relates to a bumper for a motor vehicle. Claim 9 recites the features of an outer bumper part means; and inner bumper part means including base part means and side crosspiece means positioned at an angle to the base part means, the inner bumper part means including means in

regions of a transition from the base part means to the side crosspiece means for deforming the inner bumper part means in a predetermined direction in response to a force applied to the bumper, the deforming means including ridge means pointing in a desired direction of deformation. Claim 9 further recites that the outer bumper part means is connected to the inner bumper part means. Claim 9 has been amended herein without prejudice to recite that the ridge means is located at an upper portion of the inner bumper part means. Support for this amendment may be found, for example, in Figure 9 and in the specification at page 6, lines 8 to 13.

The Final Office Action contends that Figure 8 of Kinoshita et al. illustrates a ridge in the part denoted by reference numeral 14. While Applicants do not necessarily agree with this contentions, or any of the other contentions contained in the Office Action, particularly since no English-language translation of Kinoshita et al. has been provided, it is readily apparent that the part denoted by reference numeral 14 does not include a ridge located in an upper portion of that part. As such, it is respectfully submitted that Kinoshita et al. do not anticipate amended claims 1 and 9.

As for claims 2 to 8, which ultimately depend from claim 1 and therefore include all of the features recited in claim 1, it is respectfully submitted that Kinoshita et al. do not anticipate these dependent claims for at least the same reasons more fully set forth above in support of the patentability of claim 1.

In addition, regarding claim 8, Applicants do not agree that Kinoshita et al. inherently disclose a ridge that extends over a substantial part of a width of an inner bumper part. Since Figure 8 appears to be a cross-sectional view, it is not readily apparent that the alleged ridge necessarily extends over a substantial part of a width of the part denoted by reference numeral 14. Thus, it is respectfully submitted that Kinoshita et al. do not anticipate claim 8 for this additional reason.

In view of all of the foregoing, withdrawal of this rejection is respectfully requested.

III. Conclusion

It is therefore respectfully submitted that the pending claims are allowable. All issues raised by the Examiner have been addressed, an early and favorable action on the merits is solicited.

Respectfully submitted,

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